

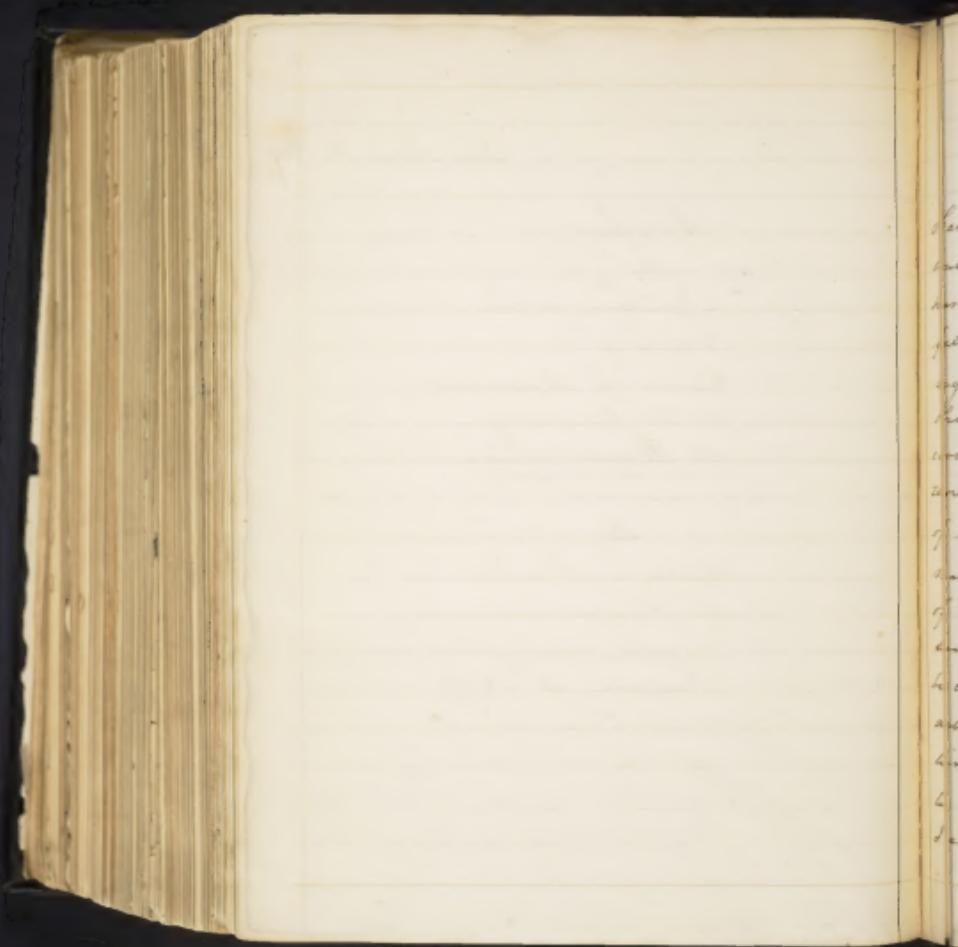
Read March 10 1829

An essay  
on  
Neuralgia, for the  
Degree of  
Doctor of Medicine,  
in the University  
of Pennsylvania.

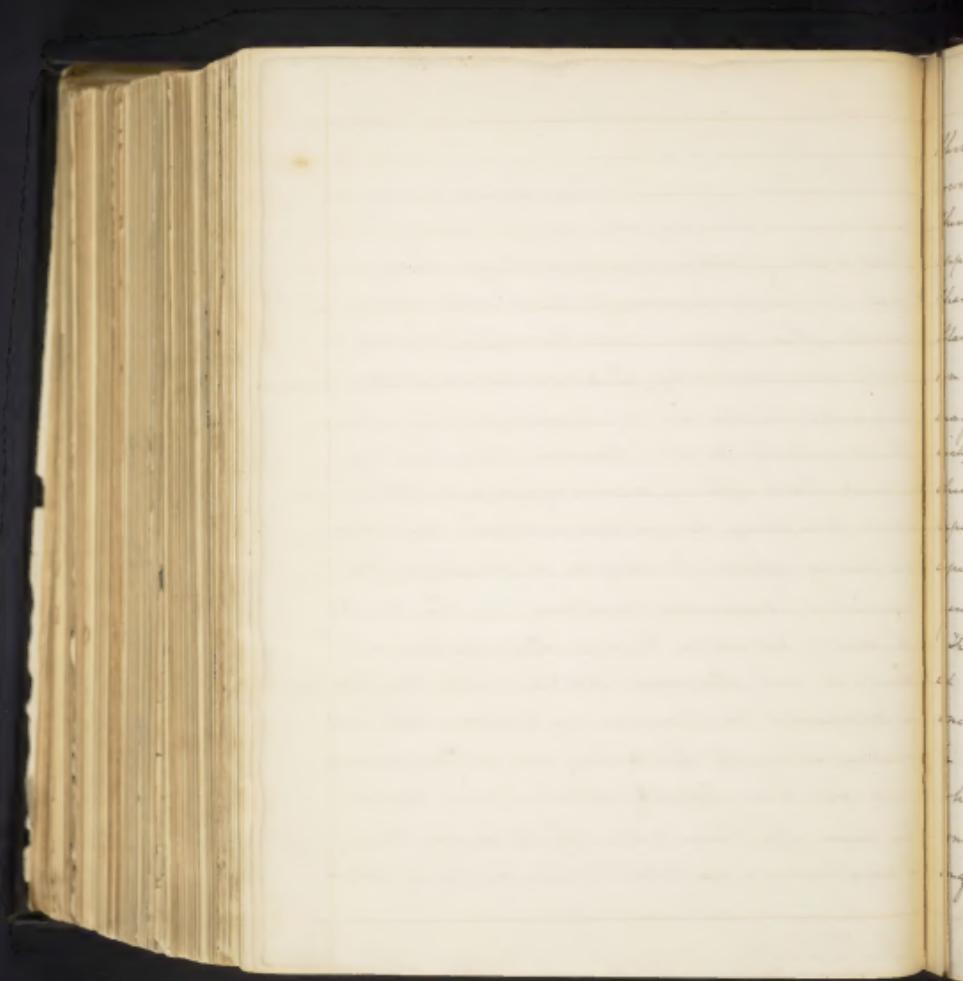
By  
William Smith.  
of Virginia.

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January 13<sup>th</sup> 1829.

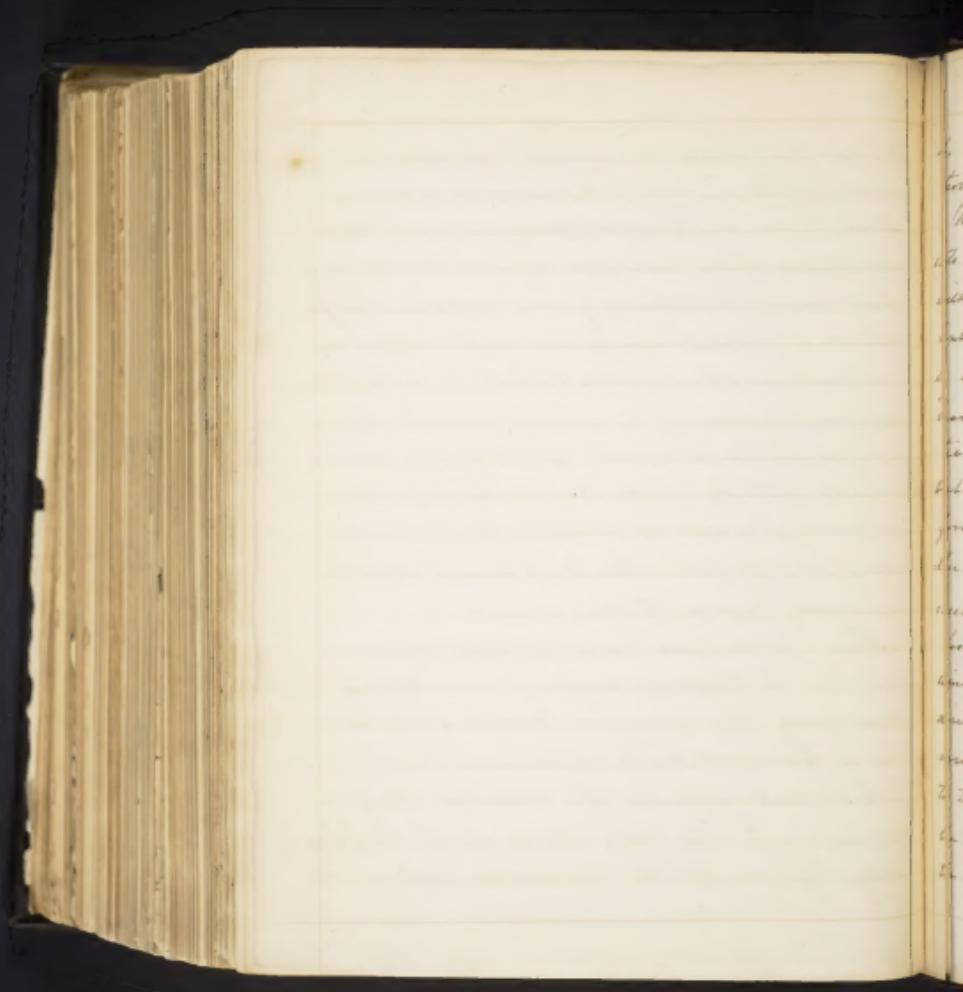


Has I the gratifying prospect of being about to make known to those into whose hands this paper may hereafter chance to fall, any discovery of importance either as regards the nature or treatment of this disease, but horrid disease; this writing would have been commenced under those pleasing sensations, which the idea of being about to confer a benefit on mankind naturally produces in the mind of every sincere being. But unfortunately such is not the case, and I shall therefore be compelled to pursue my course, with an anticipation of ill<sup>t</sup>s etc, as a compensation for any trouble which I may encounter, than the ban idea of knowing that I am acting in concurrence with an estee-



blished custom of the ancient and much re-  
nown'd school of which I am a member -  
There is less another consideration much more  
appalling than that just alluded to. Merely  
that having had scarcely any opportunity of  
obtaining a knowledge of the disease, from my  
own personal observation, I shall be under the  
disagreeable necessity of relying almost exclus-  
ively upon the statements of those who have  
already publicly made known their opinions  
 respecting it - and consequently can scarcely  
 expect to add but little to what is already  
 generally known of the disease -

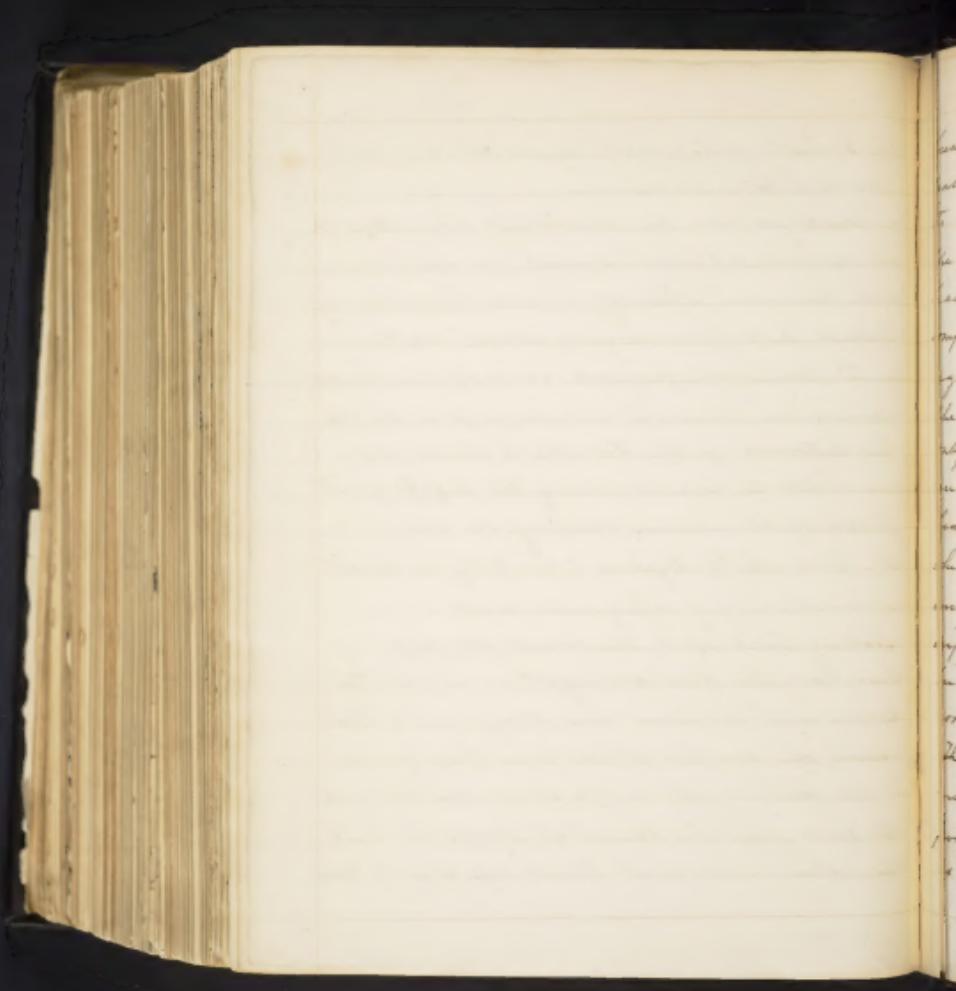
These considerations have almost constrain-  
ed me to forbear saying any thing  
concerning this disease. Should I however  
be so fortunate as to offer any thing  
which may even in the smallest degree  
contribute to the alleviation of the suffer-  
ing of one of the miserable victims of



to, I shall feel amply rewarded for any trouble I may experience.

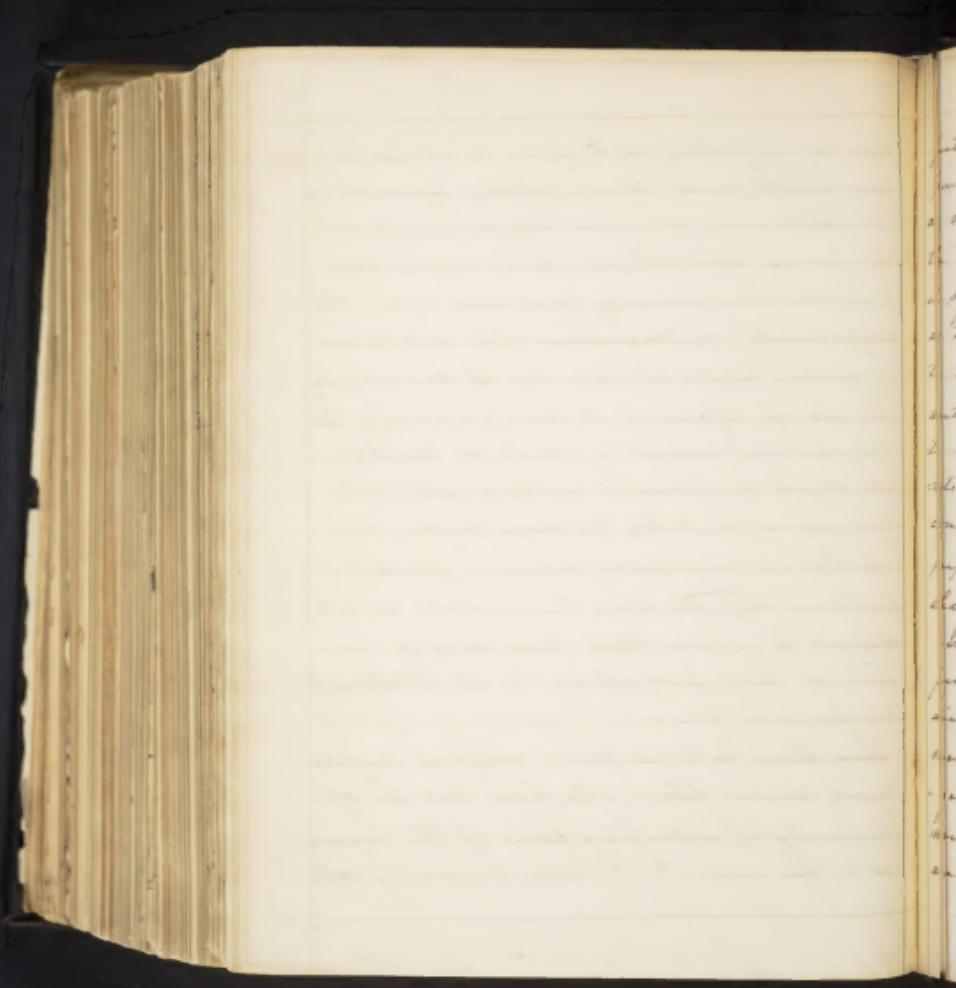
Neuralgia has, by nosologists, been divided into several different species, in accordance with the nerves affected; but it being my intention to confine myself almost exclusively to that most frequent form of the disease bearing the name of neuralgia facialis, the tic dolorosus of the French, I shall have but little to say concerning the less frequent forms of the disease, occurring in various other parts of the system, & probably in most cases without any assignable cause.

Looking back upon the considerable lapse of time since the first intelligible account of the disease, and the same time considering the variety of monographs which have been given to the public upon it, we shall probably at the first view be somewhat surprised that the advancement in its knowledge should have



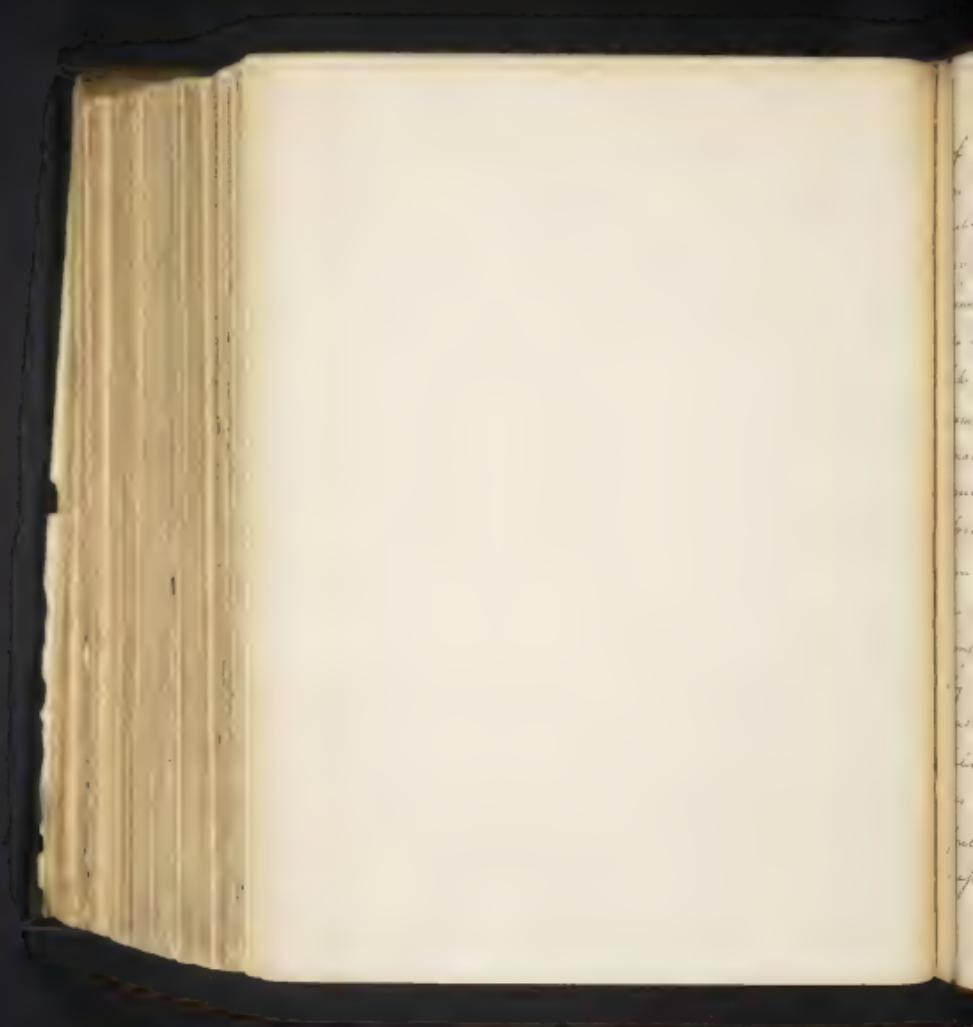
been so very slow as to leave us at the present remote period almost entirely ignorant of its nature, and not much better acquainted with the proper mode of treatment. On the other hand, however, leisurely reflecting upon the comparatively rare occurrence of it, and the consequently limited opportunity of deriving, by the aid of dissection, its true pathology, the only probable means by which to deserve an object can be accomplished, and bearing in mind too the deep mystery in which it on very many occasions seems to be involved; and we shall then probably be best disposed to wonder that there should have been a slow progression to its thorough comprehension.

There seems to be a pretty uniform agreement among those who have had an opportunity of witnessing cases of the disease as to the nerves commonly primarily af-



used as well as a provision concerning  
mail striking along the streets now as then  
as might be expected from the distance in which  
the house is, no conveniently accessible place  
is by no means the same general movement  
as to be caused. There is probably no one cause  
to which it can be reasonably attributed  
and this on account, notwithstanding the sub-  
ject was discussed at the continental - the  
role of the different <sup>in</sup> cities established  
concerning it, for which I am not yet  
informed, even did I desire it especially. I  
shall proceed with what I could say.

It has long been the opinion of some  
involved distinguished in the science & the  
business, that favorable conditions of the al-  
most every canal, are a very frequent a-  
gent in the production of disease to the  
natives. The facts in support of this opinion  
are so numerous, as to, include every, notably,



of doubt as to care also. Indeed, . . .  
you will have in a more superficial manner directed no attention to the stomach even when  
very slightly enfeebled must have stunted the  
general nervous insulation exerting throughout  
the whole system but especially in those parts  
between which and the stomach the nervous  
communication is more immediate.  
Many have had abundant reason to be con-  
vinced of the truth of such an opinion  
from the bare circumstance of having la-  
ken into their stomachs even when in a most  
healthy condition food either in an  
improper quantity or of an improper qual-  
ity. The food being taken into the stomach,  
and remaining in it too long from the ina-  
bility of that organ from either of the cau-  
ses above alluded to, to digest it, there will  
fully uniformly be experienced much uneas-  
iness about the stomach, arising no doubt from



in irritation of the nerves, produced by the food acting as extraneous matter upon them. This state of things continuing & the unpleasant sensations about the region of the stomach becoming more painful, we shall in the next place, probably before the slightest disturbance can be discerned either in the circulatory, or in any other part of the system, one which the stomach config-  
edly has so much influence to sensible  
of painful sympathetic affection about  
the head & parts most con'gous to it pro-  
voking thereby uncontrollably not only to 't the  
consummation was made exclusively  
thence the irritation of the nerves but  
also the particulars close nervous con-  
nection existing between the brain & the  
stomach. In the very protracted & severe disease  
of the stomach, the same intimate connec-  
tion between the brain & stomach will be



and it seems to tell us in how a case  
the stomach was probably, when we think  
of it, serious & necessary cause alarm in the  
man, and at the sight to mortified  
in the second state of life, it's natural  
answering to him to consider mainly its im-  
fluence over the mind & cause it more rage  
of time any other part to stand in its  
praised state.

These several considerations, together with the  
great liability of the head & the consciousness  
leads to much more no account of the  
stomach being bad - an opinion that  
the disease in question may frequently  
originate in some unhealthy state of that  
organ. There are other facts too, which  
certainly have a very direct tendency  
to point to such a state in the mind  
in the man. Then we know that the one  
of emotions in the disease, has been often



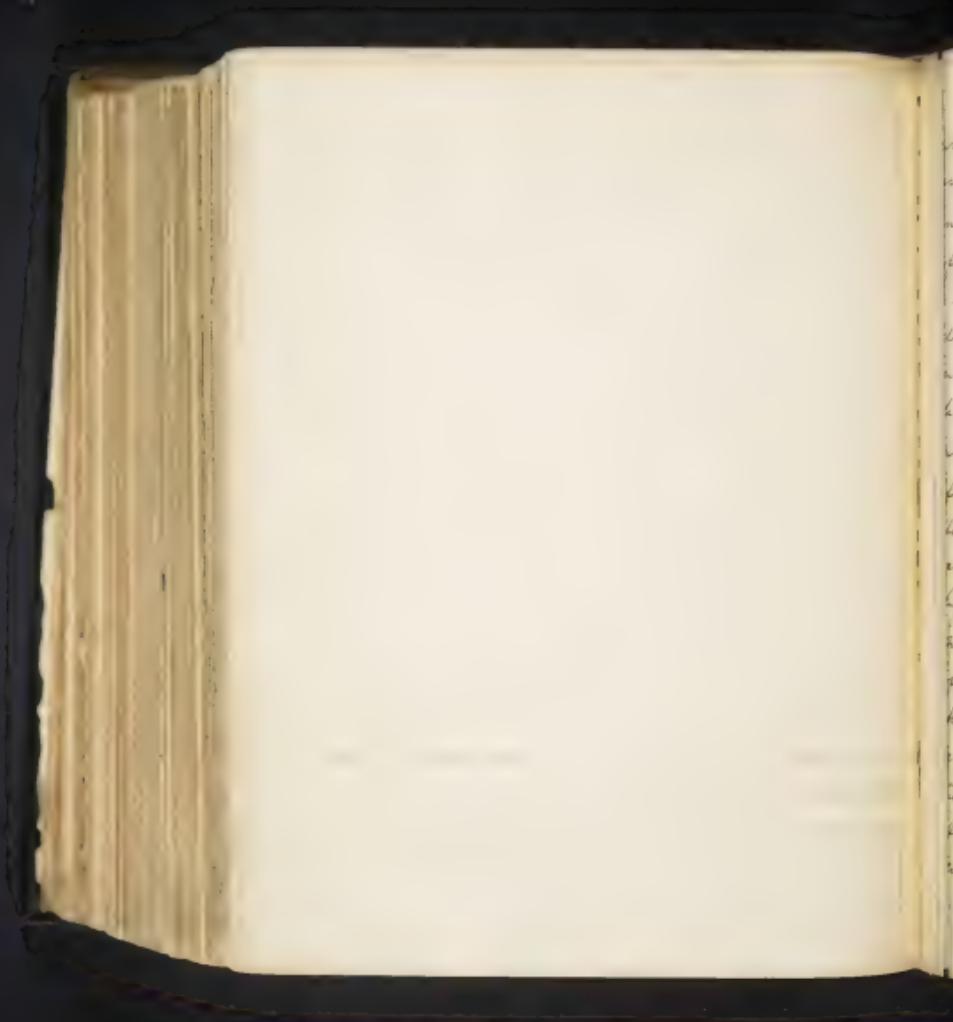
ded with a few words so I will not  
waste time, however, in this case  
as you know the subject and I do  
not think it is necessary to discuss  
it before this will bring you up to  
speed on a great doctrine. And such  
that is evident & in demand. One of  
these affecting a just man, when he has  
done wrong to others severely, and in the de-  
gree, or in which he himself does not.  
There are three reasons to believe when  
and in one or few days in consideration the  
punishment can not be so admitted to be  
certainly that in a few days same per-  
son has done some action in most  
cases as affects - as an example, that  
painted heretical a son of the church  
a desire & purpose was really aimed to  
be dolorous might be used - I may  
as well use an instance to measure them



that the disease - - - - - - -  
situation or state - - - - - - - - - - -  
frequently, to proceed from a relaxed state of  
the Stomach -

These facts combined evidently at such  
times as some treatment must be used &  
suitable, warrant the conclusion on the  
disease on such occasion, frequent  
as, I have often stated, from some un-  
healing state of the Stomach.

The other case - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -  
think the bare circumstance of suddenly  
losing, without such alarming symptoms of fever  
as may now seem liable to a solicitude  
and cause to alarm the physician I have  
adopted, as I can not conceive how they  
all this banal cause, or the cure of the  
disease, if it be not through the medium  
of the Stomach - that is by removing the  
diseased condition of that organ upon



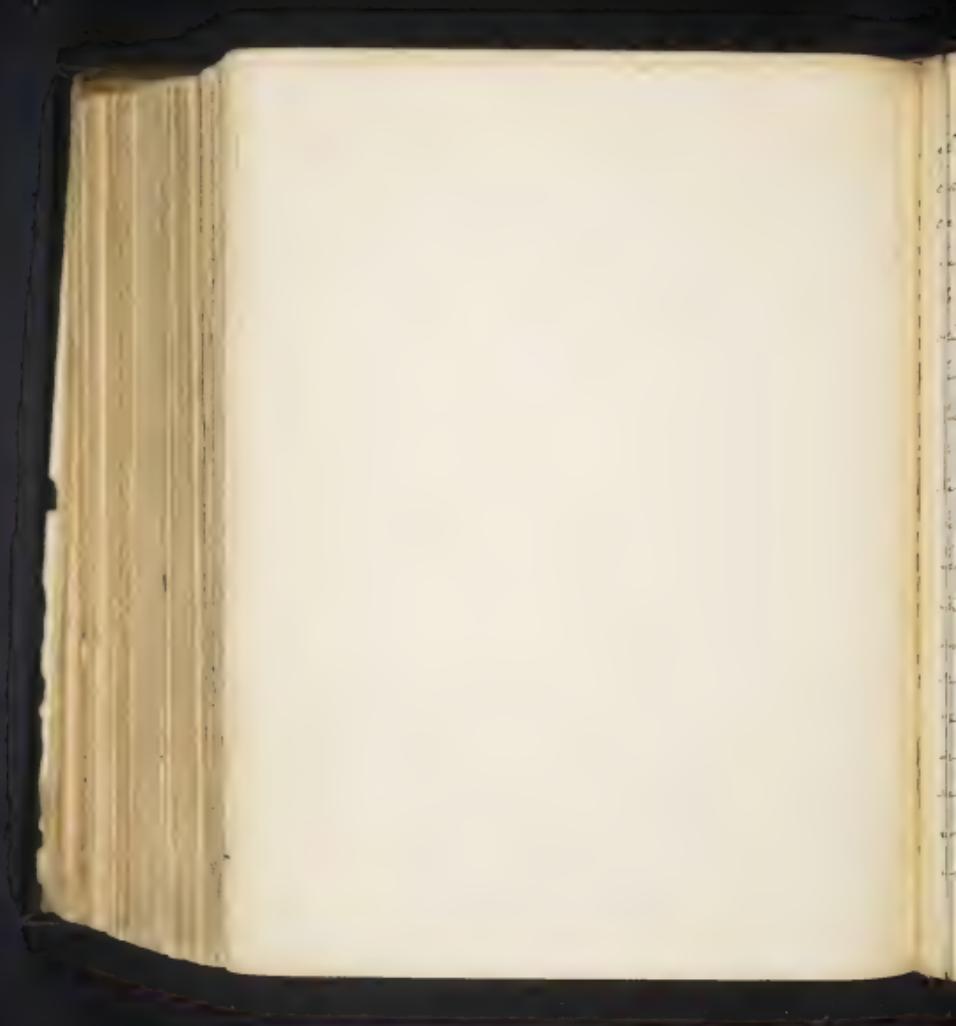
which I maintain the disease in the great  
or number of cases depends, and which  
in all probability must necessarily soon  
fail, its cause being removed -

I have already indirectly acknowledged  
that there are some objections to the opin-  
ion I entertain of the disease in considera-  
tion depending upon an unhealthiness  
of the stomach. I am aware that it may in the  
first place be very reasonably argued,  
that did the disease arise from a viti-  
ated condition of the stomach, it is frequent-  
ly so. I have supposed it to do, would there  
not be obvious, both of its own natural  
functions, as well as of those of other  
parts of the system over which it ex-  
erts such direct influence, greater dis-  
turbance than can be said to exist in  
severely any case, at least in the con-  
nexion of the attack and recovery.



would not be considered, devoted to the sea  
marks as a medium through which a  
man might possibly be enabled now to be  
attended under such unusual circumstances.  
has neither been discovered to be the case.

in the same manner as the  
other marks, and it is evident  
in this case that the marks are  
not intended to be used in the case  
of a shipwreck, but to be used in  
the case of a vessel running aground  
or being unable to proceed to her  
course, and in this belief it has  
been determined to put up a mark  
to the east of the island, but although  
as many arguments it may not  
be in case better to decide in accordance  
with the advice derived from the local



at the moment & would give other  
causes, yet do I admit that such is the  
case, and consequently it can not but be de-  
sired that such slave drivers should  
be got rid of, and that we will work  
with them in their course in the hope  
that a time may be found when  
they will be got rid of, and that  
such a time will come when  
such drivers will be compelled  
to leave, and that it will be  
done, for it is not wise to hang  
on a soldier & see that he is never known  
that he is掛onding to you that he is  
not needed in carrying on your state  
they managed themselves & the soldiers  
of all in a lie & the executioner &  
you hardly seemed to feel a qualm  
and consequently the circumstances & you  
sometimes having to do good in the course  
under command of the angels & we take



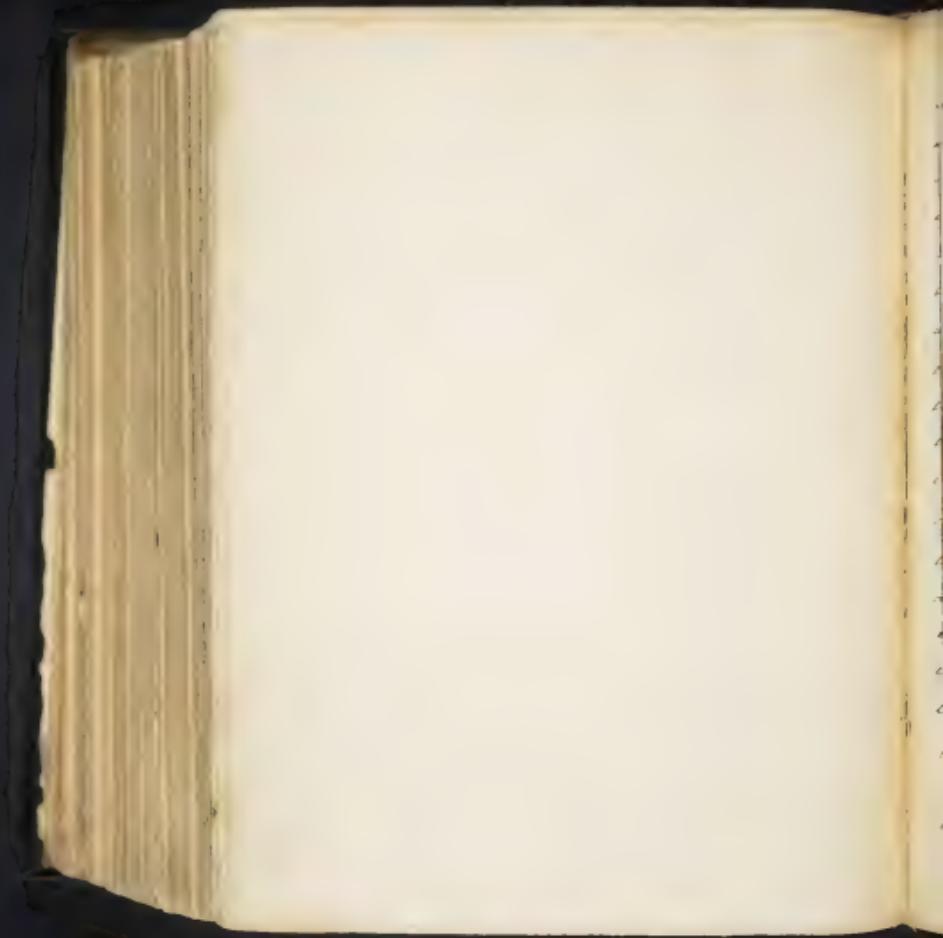
against the opinion I have now endeav-  
ing to establish  
to our mutual & my particular benefit  
and that of the whole naval & mercantile service  
by which we are enabled to take  
such an advantage of the enemy as to make  
any resistance to his landing action  
more difficult in the ultimate result than  
is required to render their force  
insufficient. And I don't see  
why the same can exist so difficultly  
that it can be done without  
the loss of time or the risk of  
injury to the service by the  
other arm'd vessels & not have the  
effect any disengagement of the  
army of the enemy, to send to him  
of course, such a blow in some all round  
circumstances including himself, as  
the most positive means of defeating  
the contest.



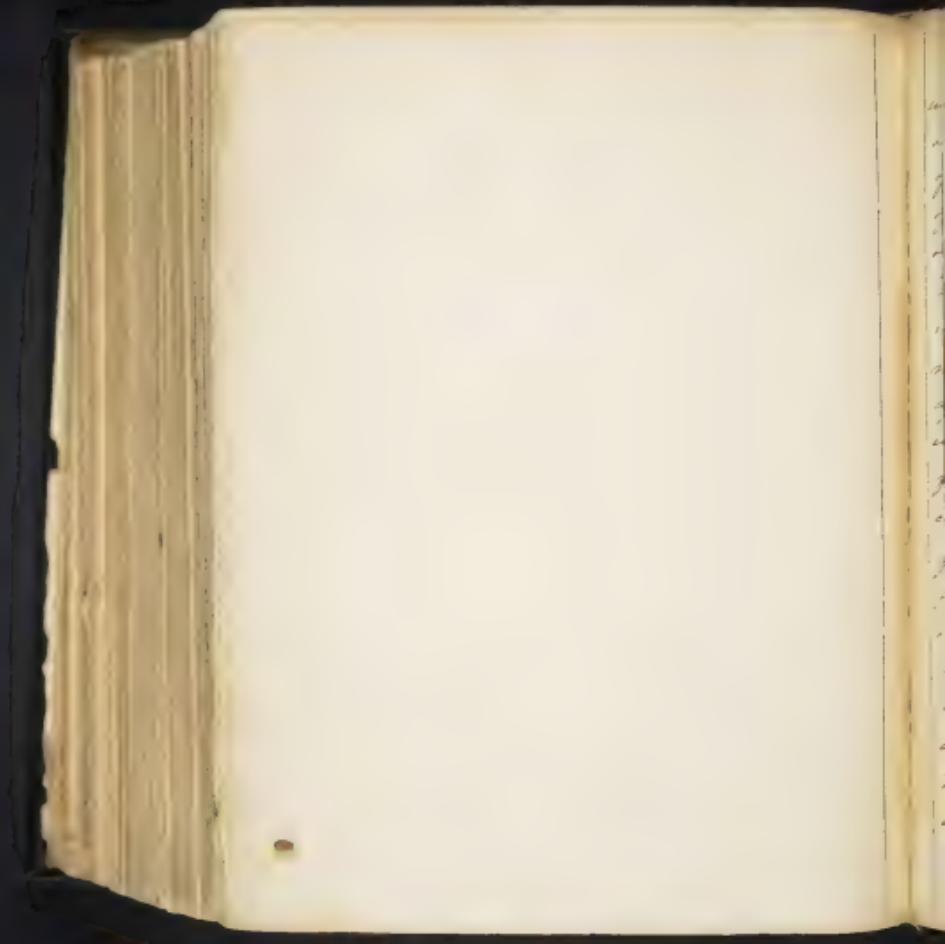
the use of bacterial sheets alone have  
failed however to produce the intended effect  
or may seem very near to it the ultimate  
test of such treatment is in not so  
being debilitated after treatment.

A variety of other measures has been used  
in the disease, and that some of them have  
been beneficial is obvious and certain.  
Nearly half a dozen of the more active drugs  
are mentioned, some of different kinds  
to have been used in the cure of the disease,  
and there are not wanting many  
authorities in support of their claim to  
attention.

That they may have been used in a  
peculiar temporary case I think it  
not all doubtful but judging from the  
frequency of their employment & the very  
few cases in which they have been  
alleged to have effected cures I suspect



they have very little power in completely  
decimating the disease. Considering first  
an opinion in regard to the use of various  
medicines in the disease, namely that  
there are still others still better than  
rhubarb to alleviate the aches & pain are  
very abundant in a panoply of the dis-  
ease, & I suspecting that opium, that most  
active of medicines will for such purpose  
in this as in most other affections be found  
in a great measure to subserve the use  
of every other remedy, I shall say no  
thing more concerning the use of these me-  
dicines except barely to add that the  
extract of Rheubarbarum having been found  
useful by Dr. Sydenham in elections which I  
think not very difficult <sup>to</sup> this, might  
perhaps be equally beneficial here.  
The only other remedies of which I am  
conversant as having been used, that have



worthy & I am sure are local irritants  
acting both generally & directly, some  
of the material preparations & the division  
of the affections never. We are told by Dr. Jones  
now that in the case of a young woman  
which came under his direction, having  
many of the symptoms of menorrhagia, the  
most decided benefit was obtained by the  
application of a cloth wet, together with the  
use of, iugation medicament. He goes on  
further to state that this is not an un-  
common occurrence in the case, inst of  
female bls & that we believe it to be  
and almost exclusively upon an ex-  
cess of the stomach or bowels.  
of the correctness of such an opinion  
I entertain no doubt; and equally satisfied  
am I, that the benefit which resulted from  
the use of the remedies above mentioned  
is mainly to be attributed to the jurgatives



Showing general & violent spasms, varieties  
under the idea that the disease depends largely  
on an unequal circulation in the vessels  
of the brain. Shows such a state of things  
as is necessary to exert the ideas of treatment  
just mentioned would certainly be very appropriate. This however I suspect is rarely the  
case, and bleeding insuffl. ought not to be  
ranked among the remedies of the disease.

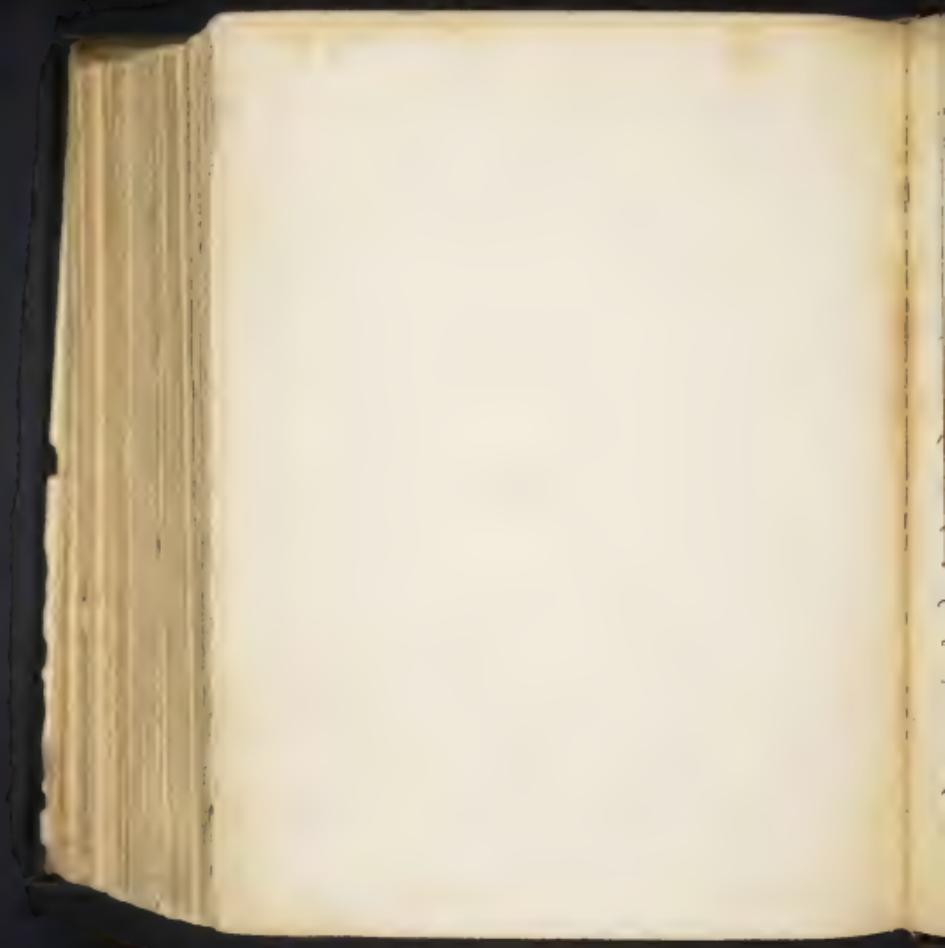
Syrups as I believe mentioned, have also  
been used here. There is however by no  
means a general concurrence of opini-  
ons as respecting them - Some of the  
most distinguished physicians considering  
them as having scarcely any claims what-  
ever to attention. While others, whom opinion  
one or evidently entitled to respect speak  
of their decided utility in the most un-  
equivocal manner. To reconcile such con-  
trariety of opinion may appear some.



what sufficient though my own experience  
inclines me to the adoption of the latter o  
pinion. Certain I am that some of these me  
asures have more very frequently much ad  
vantage, but to what particular cases of the  
disease it is best adapted I am unable to  
say, perhaps to those cases in which great  
debility exists, whether original or brought  
on by the more active means of cure.

The measure to which I have just referred  
is the Salic - Sarsaparilla, in  
one case in which I have seen  
it used for even the most decided atro  
phy. This was the case of an aged man  
with very extremely feeble & delicate & hav  
ing no appetite of course, save that of  
the objects here was directed to me the  
confection to be taken twice a day.

This accompanying insufficient to ac  
tect the disease, the dose was gradually



increased to double the number & in all  
the symptoms disappeared. In this state  
the patient remained for seven or eight  
years, after a considerable course of time,  
being soon & now come much excited,  
the disease returned with all its former  
violence. The bark was again immediately  
applied to the same doses & with the same  
good effect.

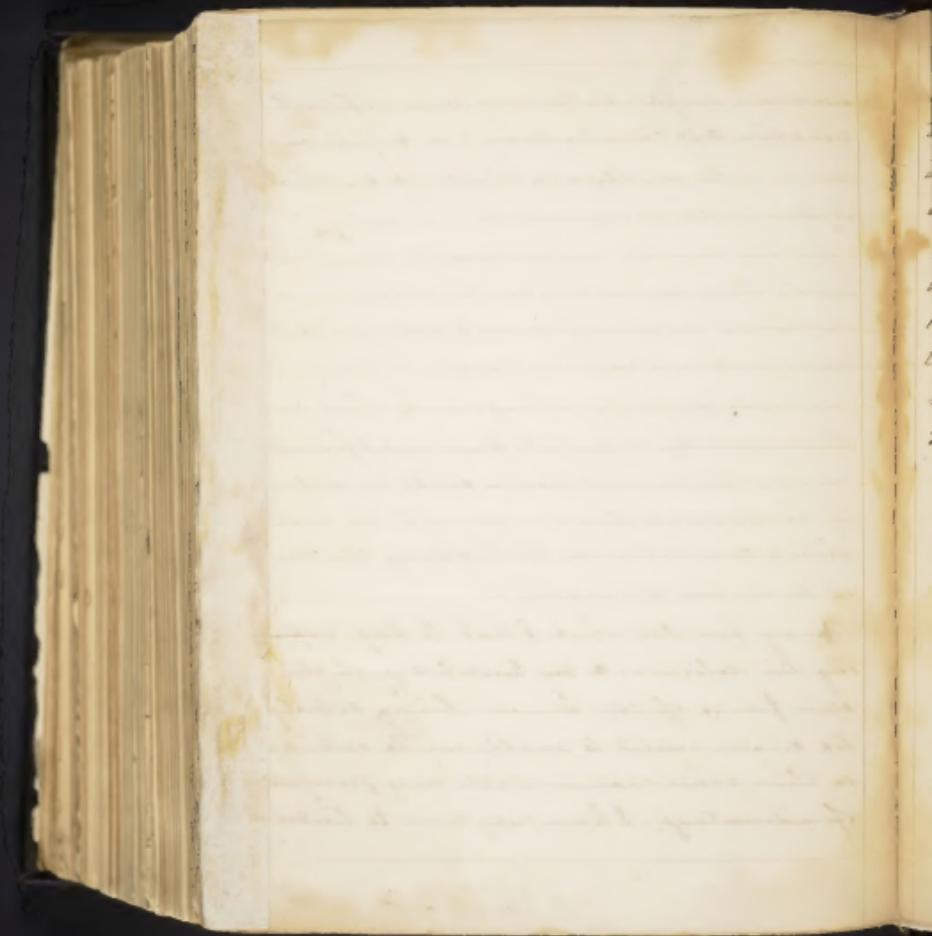
Several other cases have also lately been  
referred to me, on which this medicine has  
acted with the same good effect. of the  
circumstances attending these cases however  
as I know nothing, and have only no-  
ticed them with a view of attracting  
attention to the use of the remedy.  
It will readily be imagined from what  
I have previously said, that I should by  
no means be disposed to rely upon it as  
an exclusive remedy, though it may



sometimes useful in aiding more efficient remedies. And cases too may now & then occur, as in the one already mentioned, in which it alone will prove useful.

The only remedy in the case of the disease which it remains for me to mention, is the division of the diaphragm nerve - And this operation I conceive might, in every case with propriety be performed, where another means of cure had been ineffectual - provided the disease now could be distinctly ascertained, & there were ~~now~~ no accidental circumstances forbidding the use of such an operation -

Having finished what I had to say respecting his dolourous, & my knowledge of the other forms of the disease being entirely too circumscribed to enable me to enter up on them consideration with any prospect of advantage, I have only now to tender



my thanks to the professors for the opportunities which they have kindly afforded me of profiting by their lectures, & to express a hope that the time may not long arrive when some one of the members of their school shall distinguish himself by discarding the now obscure pathology of this disease, & adopting a more rational mode of treatment -  
theron.



10 - Pres